

177 formerly had a few riding oxen. Both of these are due to European
492 contact. The Taimahety, at the northern end of the plateau, use
oxen as pack animals and apparently have done so since pre-European
times. The loads are placed in cloth bags, which are slung across
the animal behind the hump, one hanging on each side.

233 It is safe to say that if all the cattle belonging to the Tanala
556 Menabe were destroyed over night, no member of the tribe would
miss a meal or suffer any other serious hardship. Their loss would
be somewhat more serious to the Ikongo, but they would still be
able to get along quite well without them. In spite of this lack of
practical value, cattle are everywhere of great social importance.

[454] With the possible exception of slaves, which no longer exist, they
represent the only form of interest-bearing investment possible under
native conditions. Every man tries to accumulate as many as
possible and his standing in the community is largely determined by
[777] the size of his herd. Charms to increase the fertility of cattle are
common and cattle are only sold or killed in case of absolute necessity.

They are regarded almost as members of the family and the idiosyn-
crasies of each animal are well known. One informant told me that
they are the only animals which possess souls. They are not regarded
[782] as sacred, but the killing of an ox, either as a sacrifice or for meat,
is an integral part of practically all important ceremonies.

685 Although the Tanala consider ordinary theft as one of the most
556 serious of all offenses, cattle stealing is regarded as honorable so
long as the members of one's own village are not molested. In fact,
it is considered a proper occupation for a young man of spirit and
offers an easy road to wealth and advancement. The native attitude
is comparable to that of our own Plains Indians toward horse
stealing. Cattle formed the most important part of the spoil in
[721] warfare and a successful theft was in the nature of a war exploit.
European efforts to suppress it have rather heightened the thief's
prestige by increasing his hazards.

541 Bull baiting and watching fighting bulls were both important
764 sports in pre-European times. They still persist, but are becoming
rare. I could get no information on bull baiting among the Ikongo,
but it was probably a regular part of important funerals there, as
among the Menabe. In the latter group it was customary, in the
course of the funeral festivities, to drive up one or two bulls. These
were baited by the young men, who would incite them to charge
and then avoid their rushes, swing by their tails, leap on their
backs, etc. A favorite trick was to await the charge, catch the bull's

ECONOMIC LIFE

67

meat was cut, each piece wrapped in leaves, and the whole packed 252 in. Stones, heated in a near-by fire, were placed on top and the whole covered with more leaves, but no earth or embers. The moisture from the meat and leaves made a little broth, which collected in the bottom of the hole. This method continued in use long after the introduction of pottery and one locality is still known as Anton-atra because it was the usual practice of the people living there.

Calves or small cattle were sometimes cooked whole by means of thick spongy vines of two species called *rahipika* and *rahimarana*. The ends of two or three of these vines were inserted into each nostril and into the anus, while the other ends were put in a fire. The hot sap and steam conducted into the animal in this way cooked it thoroughly. It is said that this method is still used by cattle thieves when they wish to devour their booty on the spot.

At the present time nearly all food is boiled in iron pots obtained from the traders. Such pots are highly valued and when a Tanala leaves his own territory to work in a town he will usually purchase one with his first wages. Some native families have a number of them displayed on the shelf above the fireplace as a sign of wealth. They are readily loaned to neighbors or travelers, but etiquette requires that the borrower leave a little food in the pot when he returns it. Pots are supported in the fire by a low tripod made from three pointed stones bedded in the earth of the fireplace. 415 [171] 556 426

The amount of rice to be cooked for a meal is measured out by means of a small, stiff basket. This is of standard size and holds slightly more than the cup used as a unit in our own recipes. One measure of dry rice is allowed for each adult, with a smaller measure for each child. In some houses I saw a number of graduated rice measures, used for children of different ages. 252 [204]

The rice, which has previously been pounded and winnowed, is washed until the water drains off clear. It is then put in the pot with about twice its amount of water. It is allowed to boil dry. Most of the grains are crisp and flaky, but a layer of burned rice adheres to the vessel. After the unburned rice has been taken out, water is put in the pot, stirred and brought to a boil. This water, which tastes somewhat like weak coffee, is drunk with the meal and is considered a delicacy. As a luxury, rice may be boiled with milk or broth. It is rarely if ever salted while cooking.

Although boiled rice is the staple diet, it is never served without 262 a side dish of some sort to give it flavor. Even the very poor have boiled greens, made from the leaves and shoots of a great variety

ECONOMIC LIFE

127

One of the most important forest products is raffia. This is not only an article of trade, but figures largely in native industries. The raffia palm usually grows in low, moist ground. It attains a height of from 20 to 30 feet. The natives cut the young fronds from the heart of the leaf head just before they begin to open. Care is taken not to cut too deeply, which would injure the tree. The leaflets are then cut from the midrib. 314
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The raffia fiber is a thin, tough membrane which covers both the inner and outer surface of the leaflet. It must be stripped while the leaflets are still fresh. The membrane is loosened from the leaflet at its base, the operator using his thumb nail. A dozen or more leaflets are then gathered into a bundle and the ends of the membranes seized and stripped off with a single long pull. The raffia strips are then knotted together at the small end and hung over horizontal poles to dry. They are kept in the shade for about a day, then completely dried in the sun. When dry, the raffia is done up in large twists and is then ready for the market (Fig. 14, c). The native use of raffia for cordage and in weaving has already been described.

The natives also gather various wild resins and gums for trade to Europeans, but they make little use of them themselves. [439]

PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE

To the casual visitor it appears as though all the inhabitants of a Tanala village were on much the same economic level. There are no marked differences in the housing, clothing or food of the different families. No one appears rich, but, on the other hand, there are few signs of extreme poverty. The only individuals who seem really poor are a few old women living alone. It is only on closer acquaintance that one begins to realize the extreme importance of property in the social structure. 511
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The material wants of the Tanala are few and easily satisfied, but property looms as large to them as to any group of European peasants and their attitude toward it is much the same. There is no display of wealth and all unnecessary expenditures are frowned upon, but there is a great love of money for its own sake. Any actual cash which comes into their hands is carefully hoarded. In spite of the severe penalties for theft and its relative rarity, the natives do not trust even their own families where money is concerned. A man who has a hoard of silver keeps it buried in some place known only to himself and usually does not divulge the fact even to his sons until he thinks he is about to die. 556
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SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

133

ment and money is never disbursed without a long argument. The husband keeps most of his belongings in the *Vady Be's* house and considers it his real home.

In spite of the separate housing for the wives and married sons, the Tanala family is well integrated. It is customary for the entire group to eat together in the house where the father is on that day and cooking is done in rotation. The wives aid each other in all their activities, look after each other's children, etc. There can be no doubt that polygyny does a great deal to lighten the labor of the women and they are quite as much in favor of it as the men.

The family is normally patrilocal, but among the Menabe a strong and rich family may insist that their women continue to live with them after marriage. In this case the husband comes to the wife's village or ward in the village, builds the new house there, and assists the men of her lineage in working their common land. Widows with children continue to live with their husband's family or lineage and if they remarry the new husband is usually compelled to come and live with them. This is to safeguard the children, who might otherwise be slighted or abused by their stepfather. Under the matrilocal arrangement the father has little authority in the family and the children feel more closely bound to their mother's lineage than to their father's. It is considered rather disgraceful for a man to consent to live with his wife's kin and ordinarily only one who is poor or of little account will do so.

THE LINEAGE

I have chosen this term to designate a relationship group which is very important in Tanala social and economic life. It is intermediate between the family proper and the larger units of village and gens. The lineage is composed of the recent descendants of one man and his wife or wives, tracing in the male line. Attached to it, but not altogether a part of it, are the wives of lineage members, children of lineage women whose marriages have been matrilocal and, in many cases, one or more families of hereditary slaves.

The lineage might be described as either an expanded family or an embryonic gens. The natives themselves take the former view and use the same term for it as for the family, but it is much larger than a family in the European sense, often numbering as many as seventy-five to one hundred persons. At the same time, it differs from a true gens in the closer blood relationship existing between members, its closer social and economic integration and its rather transitory nature.

RELIGION

175

in state for a month or so. For three days they leave the corpse uncovered; but after this they wrap it in red *lamba* [mantles] and place it in a coffin, which they do not carry to the cemetery until the completion of the month. The liquid products of decomposition flow upon the earthen floor of the house and are simply covered with earth. During all the time of the lying-in-state the surviving partner (husband or wife) sleeps in the house as if his or her spouse were still living. This custom obtains also among the Betsimisarakas, Tanosy and other tribes. The coffin is deposited in a solitary place in the forest and is surrounded by a palisade of tree trunks which hides its cover.

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"The *andriana* or chiefs whose ancestors are of foreign (Arab) extraction, are, on the contrary, interred on the very day of their death. The coffin, with a lid in the shape of a roof, on which is fixed a pair of horns, is carried into the dense forest and placed under a kind of shed. An image, suspended in a corner of the house where the death took place, receives for six weeks all the signs of grief and marks of regret from the people, after which it is thrown into the nearest river with great ceremony. The royal cemetery is visited from time to time to renew the coffins when they fall into decay and also to change the *lamba* in which the bones are enveloped." (Grandidier, *op. cit.*, pp. 313-314.)¹ All my Menabe informants denied the existence of most of the features in which the above account differs from my own and I can only assume that the practices described are those of some gens with which I never came in contact.

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TOMBS

All the Tanala employ communal tombs known as *kibory*, but there is a good deal of variation in detail. Some of the present differences may be due to the diverse origin of the various gentes, but there can be little doubt that the Tanala burial practices have been influenced by those of their neighbors on the east and west. To make these influences clear it seems best to give a brief description of the tombs used by the tribes bordering on their territory.

The Imerina and Betsileo, who occupy the plateau to the west, employ family vaults. When a man becomes sufficiently rich he will build a tomb for himself and his descendants. This will be used by his children, grandchildren, etc., in the male line until one of them decides to found a tomb of his own. A person who does this acquires great prestige and becomes the ancestor of a new family. New tombs are constantly being erected and the whole line of descendants will

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¹[See p. 173, category 116 or 764 - Analyst]